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and the superior attractions of the wonderful Italian singers of the 18th century. The creation of bass recitative and air in its fullest dignity, may certainly be assigned to Purcell. His musical imagination is always equal with, or beyond the level of, the poetry; he is inspired as he reads it, and grandeur, sweetness, and pathos are equally at his command. Handel must have been surrounded with the compositions of Purcell on his arrival in England, and the orchestral *Te Deum* and *Jubilate in D*, must have afforded him one of his strongest and earliest impressions of the ecclesiastical music of the country. He must have heard also, in Croft, those cathedral changes of harmony and those declamatory choruses which distinguished our old church music. What excellent hints he received every one knows who can judge of many of his recitatives, bass airs, and choruses. Handel has the merit of inventing the English oratorio; but he was either involved in difficulties with singers, or better adapted to supply the material than to put it into order for performance. Omission and re-arrangement are continually required on a first public representation of his works. In the length and sequence of his pieces Purcell's judgment is irreproachable, after the lapse of nearly two centuries.

(To be continued.)

PARISH ORGANISTS.

WE observed an advertisement in *The Times* a few days since, which appeared to us of a kind that it may be useful to comment upon: firstly, because it shows to what a low rate the remuneration of the highest kind of musical knowledge is reduced; and, secondly, that our own experience may guard the novitiate of the profession against pecuniary disappointment and vexation of spirit. The advertisement was from a provincial professor, who addressed himself to his brethren of the tuneful art—offering to introduce an educated musician to a practice which he was about to leave, the value of which he estimated at about £200 per annum: the premium required was moderate—£30; and then came the enticing announcement to a young professor, that the parish organ might be obtained: this—together with the salary, which at present amounted to £25, and might by exertion be increased to £30!—was sufficient to excite the imagination of a youthful aspirant to fame and fortune! However, it is not with the value of the practice, or the amount (which we really think moderate) required for the introduction to it, that we have any concern; our object being more immediately to direct attention to the sum considered necessary for the remuneration of a parochial organist, whose education, if it be of a nature thoroughly to qualify him for the post, can scarcely be inferior to many of the lower grade of the clergy; for, be it understood, not only is a musical education necessary in such a case, but that kind of knowledge which is imparted at first-rate schools should form one of the qualifications of a competent parochial organist.

First, then, as to the amount of remuneration. It is absolutely impossible to obtain a properly qualified organist at a salary which to such a man must be positively beneath consideration: the sum usually offered varies from twenty-five to forty pounds a year—and, for this pittance, punctuality of attendance on Sunday, and that most irksome of all duties, frequently twice in the week, of teaching an

ignorant choir, are expected: he must patiently listen to the requirements of minister, churchwardens, and congregation, whose respective musical taste, such as it is, is generally quite at variance with each other, and whose criticism—ignorant as voluntary and mischievous—is a source of continued irritation and vexation to the organist. He hears the churchwarden express his admiration of the (Old 100th, and other old "Church tunes:" the minister, for the purpose of accommodating the taste of his flock, prefers those of a more modern kind; and the silken members of the congregation think neither collection fashionable enough;—amidst this confusion of opinion, the organist, perhaps, dares to think for himself; and, being probably a man of sound principle and enlightened understanding, adapts his materials to his means, and plays such music only as can be decently executed, and such as he thinks most in accordance with the sacred character of the duties he has to perform. Then comes the greatest enemy of all—a professor who is emulous to obtain the situation: he gains the ear of some would-be great man in the parish or locality—to whose prejudices he not only agrees to pander, but also to surrender the right of private judgment—promising, on receiving the appointment, to make the choir sing like "an angel," even though the members of it have no voices! Such is often the course pursued; the result proves the truth of the proverb about "new brooms," and sometimes the effect of the change is not even equal to that.

Such are the bickerings in country places—such the ignorant strife of some country congregations, that it is a well-known fact, that where a finished and competent musician has been displaced because his standard of knowledge was not in accordance with that of his auditory, a second-rate performer has been for a time regarded as a perfect paragon; the abuse, however, is at last its own antidote. We live in hopes that our beloved art may ere long become better understood; and juster appreciation and remuneration will follow. Until then, the consummation so devoutly to be wished will be looked for in vain.—From "*The Musical and Dramatic Review*."

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Brief Chronicle of the last Month.

POPLAR AMATEUR MUSICAL SOCIETY.—This Society gave their first concert since the introduction of instrumental performers, at the new Lecture Hall, Hale-street, on the 16th July, which was well attended. Part 1 contained Romberg's *Te Deum* in D, and a selection of sacred music from the works of Handel and Mendelssohn. Part 2 comprised Handel's *Dettingen Te Deum* and the *Coronation Anthem*. We are glad to see the progress made by the society under the able direction of Mr. C. Robinson, the conductor.

Mr. W. T. Best, Organist of the Liverpool Philharmonic Society, performed on the new organ, built for the church at Lee, in Kent, at the factory of Mr. Bishop, in Lisson Grove. The selection was from the works of Handel, Bach, Mozart, Mendelssohn, Weber, Rink, &c.; and Mr. Best's manner of using the instrument gave much satisfaction to a large audience, including many professors.

WESTMINSTER ABBEY.—The Dean and Chapter have lately instituted prizes by way of encouragement to their choir boys. The examination took place in the presence of the authorities of the Cathedral, and was conducted by Sir George Smart, at the request of the organist. The boys were divided into three classes, and the most advanced in each class received a prize.

MUSIC IN EXETER.—The visit of the Royal Agricultural Society to Exeter has been productive of immense advantage to the cause of music in that city. Not to be behind-hand with their fellow-citizens, the amateurs of the city and county had also exerted themselves to the utmost, to display to their friends the precise point of perfection to which they had arrived in the theoretical and practical resources of music. The Cathedral choir, in its morning and evening services, showed the effect of much previous discipline; and although the peculiar mode of chanting, as practised in Exeter Cathedral, does not precisely accord with my views, I am, nevertheless, bound to accord warm praise for the precision and exact intonation with which the different points of the service were performed; and would particularly notice the admirable manner in which the Rev. Prebendary Ford intoned his portion of the Liturgy—an example which might be advantageously followed by many of our church dignitaries in London and elsewhere. It is to the Exeter Oratorio Society to which I particularly directed my attention, as to that association may be attributed the vast improvement which has taken place in the progress of music in Exeter since its establishment. Formed some three or four years since by the active exertions of the worthy and intelligent secretary, Mr. Downs, and numbering amongst its ranks above two hundred of the most enthusiastic of the amateurs of the city, it has gone on progressing, until it may now fairly be classed as one of the most promising of the provincial oratorio societies.—*Musical World*.

LIVERPOOL.—The Philharmonic Society will give a concert on the 16th August, and the *Messiah* on the 19th August, at both of which Madlle. Jenny Lind will sing, being the only performances she will take part in previous to her departure for America.

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